

Six-Year Seattle Transportation Benefit District Proposal to Aid in Equitable COVID-19 Recovery

July 7, 2020

Seattle Department of Transportation



City of Seattle

Six-Year Seattle Transportation Benefit District Proposal to Aid Recovery

- The previous Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) measure – which was overwhelmingly approved by voters in 2014 – is set to expire at the end of this year.
- Today, Mayor Durkan transmitted legislation for a new STBD proposal to generate between \$20 and \$30 million a year for transit over the next six years.
- If approved by the City Council, the new STBD would go before Seattle voters this November and would support continued access to frequent and reliable transit service after the current funding sources expire at end of year.
- The new STBD proposal ensures the critical elements and bus routes of Seattle's transit network are maintained, equitable access to transit continues to be prioritized, and the City maintains its ability to scale up service as Seattle's transit ridership recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.



A Renewed STBD Package with 5 Key Priorities

- 1) Provide safe, efficient, and frequent transit for all Seattleites, particularly our essential workers fighting against this global pandemic.
- 2) Preserve a robust, connected transit system in Seattle that centers equity
- 3) Make investments that address acute mobility needs in areas like West Seattle
- 4) Invest in ORCA Opportunity for students and Low Income Access program for our vulnerable neighbors
- 5) Maintain the voter-approved 0.1 percent sales tax to provide needed resources for transportation investments and ensure continuity of critical services despite financial restrictions caused by I-976 and COVID-19

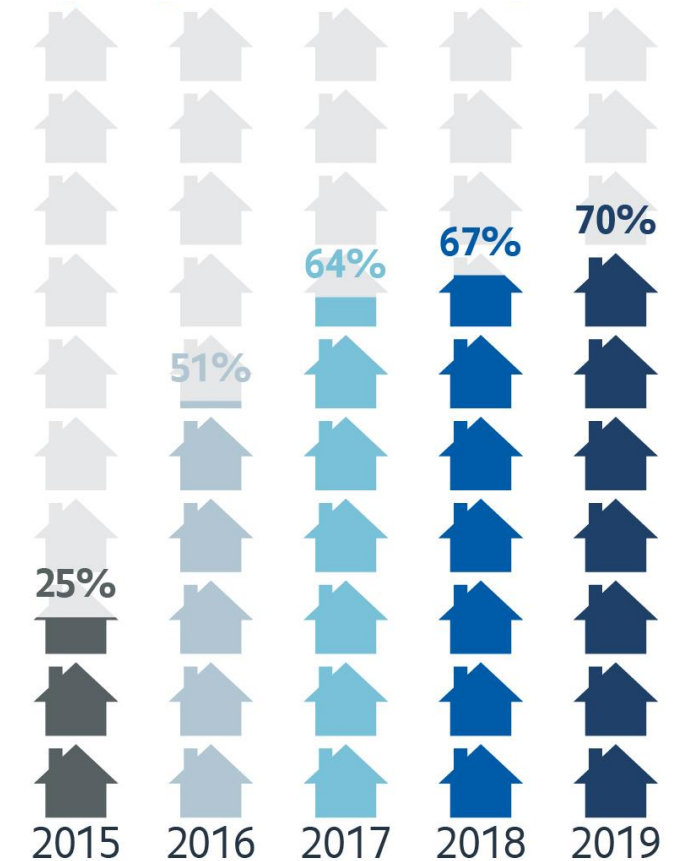


Building on a Successful STBD

STBD has funded more reliable and equitable transit projects, including:

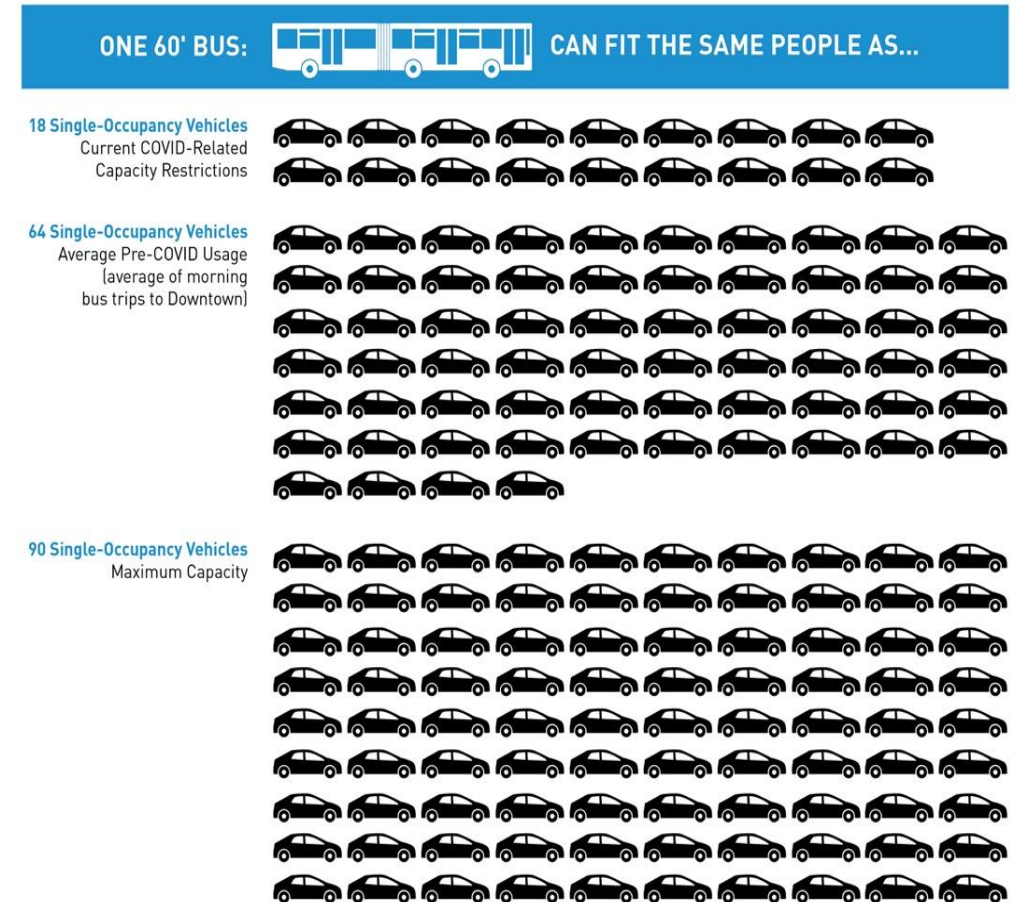
- Investing in 350,000 service hours across weekdays, nights and weekends, adding 8,000 weekly trips to King County Metro service
- Growing the portion of households within a 10-minute walk of transit service arriving every 10 minutes or better from 25 percent in 2015 to 70 percent in 2019
- Launching programs like ORCA Opportunity providing year-round transit to Seattle students
- Supporting community-based programs and trainings to increase mobility and access to transit for seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income people

Percent of Households with Access to Very Frequent Transit service, 2015-2019



1. Provide safe, efficient, and frequent transit for all Seattleites, particularly our essential workers fighting against this global pandemic.

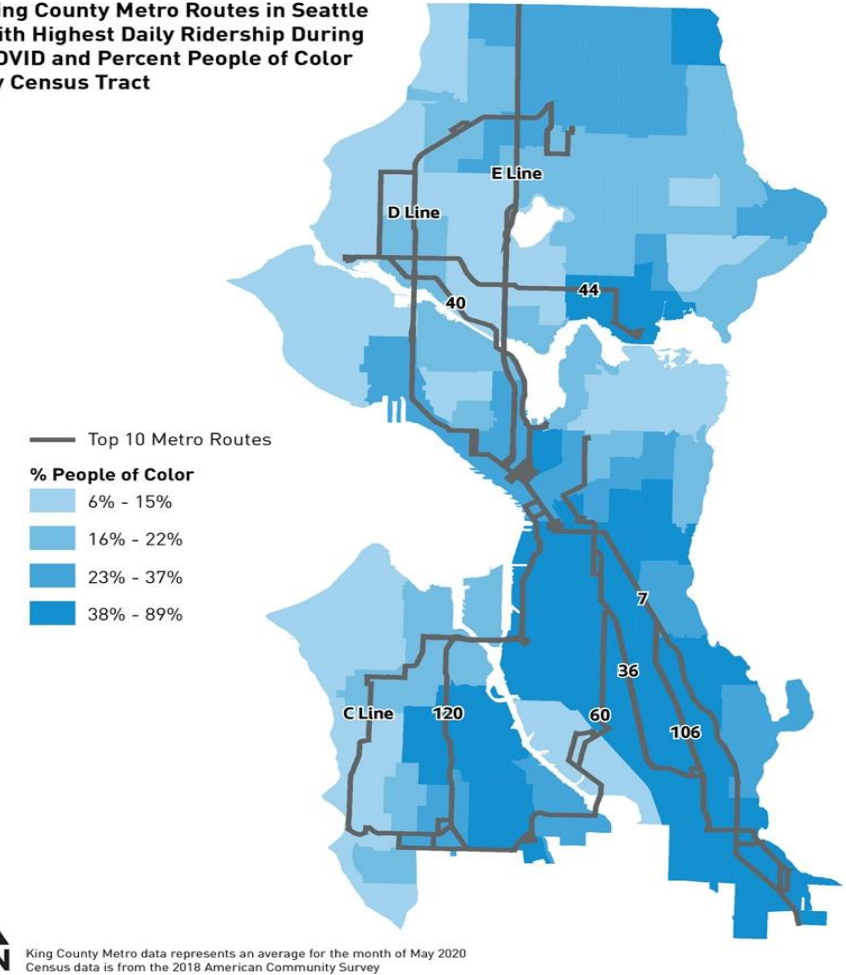
- We can't recover if people can't get around
- The proposal we are submitting today is an opportunity to prepare for and support where we want to be in 2021 and beyond
 - Many Seattleites were frequent bus riders before the COVID-19 pandemic and will expect service to be there as the economy re-opens
- Every weekday throughout this crisis, King County Metro and Sound Transit have continued to support an average 130,000 essential daily trips, and ridership continues to increase in recent weeks



2. Preserve a robust, connected transit system in Seattle that centers equity.

- Access to a reliable, frequent transit network is an economic lifeline for many, and needed now and on the road to recovery more than ever.
- Seattle must come together to support the communities that rely on public transportation – including our essential workers who have found themselves in the middle of the fight against COVID-19.
- We continue to see ridership on routes serving essential workers and communities that are most impacted by historic inequities.
 - The ten Metro routes that have had the highest daily ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic all serve Seattle areas with higher percentages of communities of color.

King County Metro Routes in Seattle with Highest Daily Ridership During COVID and Percent People of Color by Census Tract



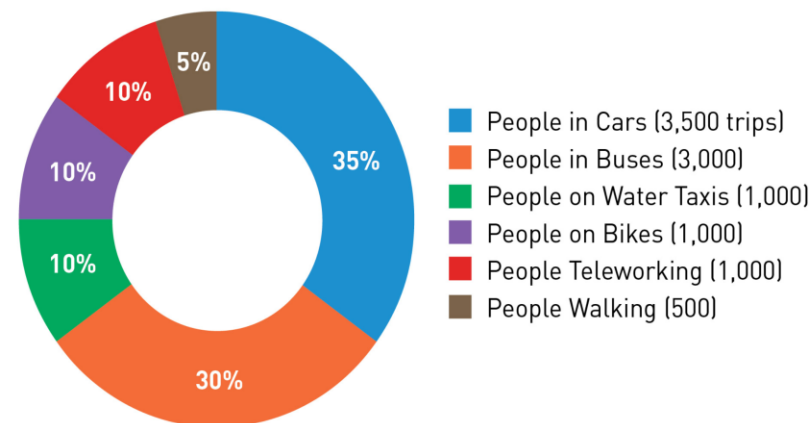
3. Make investments in that address acute mobility needs in areas like West Seattle.

- We are also facing a mobility crisis for all communities in and around West Seattle as a result of the West Seattle High-Rise Bridge closure in March of this year.
- This includes the many freight and maritime businesses in the region who play a critical role in the vibrancy of our economy, but also the many small businesses and communities acutely impacted by the closure.
- This is not just a traffic issue; it's an equity issue.
- Current detour routes have travelers heading south, cutting through some of the most diverse communities in our city, who already face disproportionate levels of pollution, asthma, and environmental injustice.

How People Get Around - Change Needed



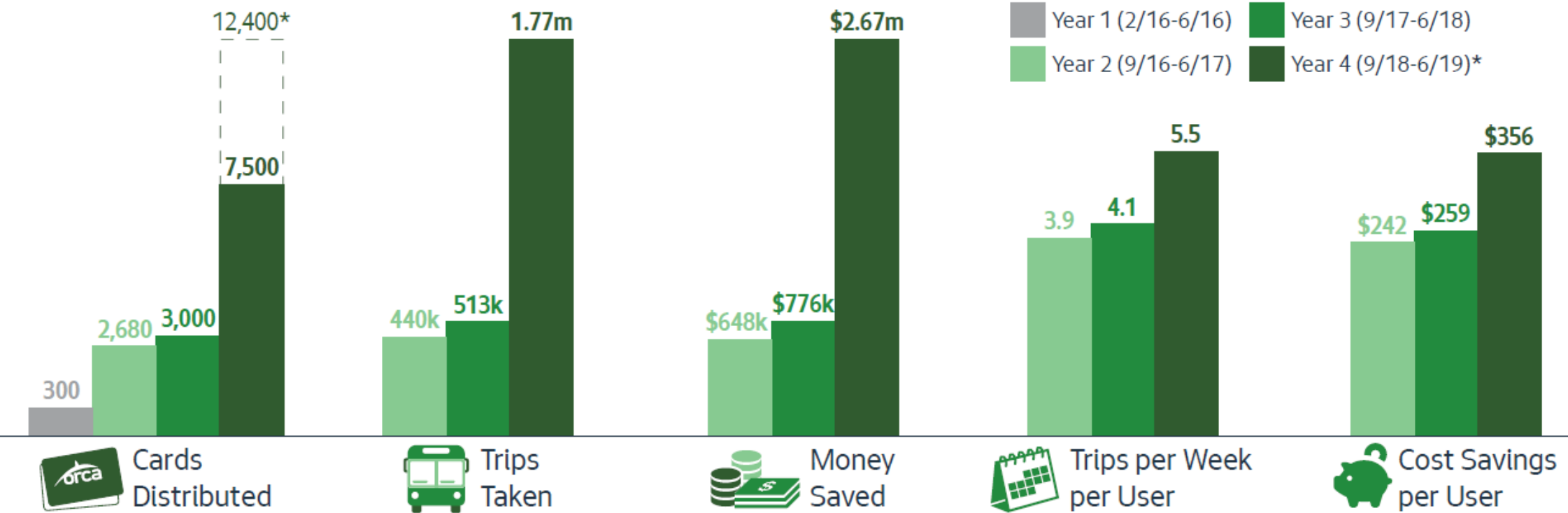
How People Get Around 2021 Goal



4. Invest in ORCA Opportunity for students and Low Income Access program for our vulnerable neighbors

ORCA Opportunity/Youth ORCA Performance 2016 - 2019 City-funded Cards

ORCA Opportunity provides a free ORCA card to all 15,000 Seattle Public Schools high school students, 500 ORCA cards for income-qualified middle school students, and Seattle Promise Scholars.



5. Maintain the voter-approved 0.1 percent sales tax to provide needed resources for transportation investment

This proposal:

- Navigates current financial restrictions caused by I-976 and COVID-19
- Maintains the previous voter-approved 0.1 percent sales tax and enables transportation investments and ensures continuity of critical services
- Does not preclude additional Vehicle License Fee revenue should that become available



Investing in Transportation Equity

Because transportation remains the second highest cost for many households, the new STBD package continues to focus on improving transit affordability and access for all Seattleites

Service

- Continued access to housing, employment and educational opportunities served by Seattle Frequent Transit Network.
- Re-evaluate previous and future STBD investments through RSJI analysis

Capital

- Investments to ensure a more reliable ride for those making essential trips by transit
- Transit spot improvements, pothole and street maintenance repair on transit corridors, and signal optimization to support transit operations

Mobility Access

- Fully fund ORCA Opportunity, a program for students
- Maintain Low Income Access program providing community engagement, training, resources, and partnerships to increase transit access

Emerging Needs

- Ensure mobility options for essential workers and those impacted by West Seattle Bridge closure
- Build the transit system needed for economic recovery
- Mitigate West Seattle Bridge closure impacts on Georgetown & South Park

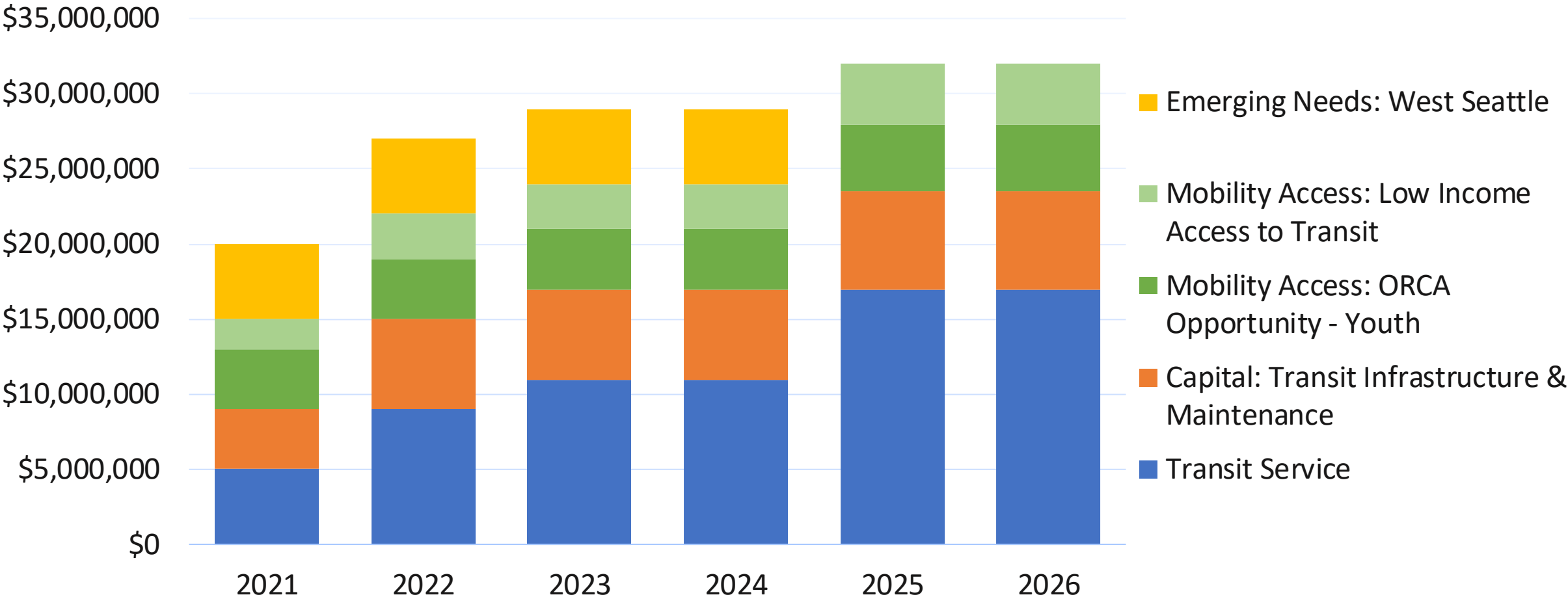


STBD Proposal (Average ~\$27M per year)

Priority	Element	Average Annual Investment
Provide safe, efficient, and frequent transit for all Seattleites	Service Investment in all-day Frequent Transit Network, with emphasis on the 15-minute network (average of \$9M funds ~50,000 hours annually); in years 5 and 6, ~80,000 annual service hours	~\$11M
Preserve a robust, connected transit system	Capital Transit spot improvements, pothole repair on transit corridors, and signal optimization to support transit operations (portion of current VLF \$20)	~\$5.8M
Invest in ORCA Opportunity for students and low-income access to transit programs for our vulnerable neighbors	Mobility Access: ORCA Opportunity for Youth Fund 7,000 12-month ORCA cards and 4,900 summer ORCA cards to enable youth mobility	~\$4M
	Mobility Access: Low Income Access to Transit Program Community-based programs to increase mobility for seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income people	~\$3M
Address acute mobility needs	Emerging Needs: West Seattle Service Investments Additional bus service to increase capacity or new/expanded water taxi service for first four years	~\$3M



STBD Package Years 1-6



Questions

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www.seattle.gov/transit/about-stbd/2021-proposal-to-provide-reliable-transit

